

# Corps contractor leads pack

By Kelsey Seeger, USACE Public Affairs

He is the alpha male for tiger and wolf cubs. He is both their leader and head scout. This may sound like the beginning of an interesting discovery channel special on wild animals, but for this den leader it is his life.

John Lawrence, a U. S. Army contractor working in Information Management and Customer Service at the Corps since February 2005, is an actual den leader for a group of second and third grade cub scouts.

He began his career as a den leader in the fall of 2005 when his second son, who was just beginning cub scouts, asked him to be his troop's leader. Ever since, Lawrence's free time has dwindled as he, along with his troop, engage in typical Cub Scout activities.

"I have a lot less free time than I

would like," said Lawrence, jokingly.

According to the most recent statistic provided by Boy Scouts of America there is 834,562 cub scouts and 667,153 Webelos scouts (4th and 5th graders) in cub scouts. The difference between cub scouts and boy scouts is that cub scouts are for those boys who are in first through fifth grade while boy scouts are for boys ages 11-17 according to the Boy Scouts of America.

Lawrence is mainly in charge of tiger cubs, first-graders, and wolf cub scouts, second graders.

The community service aspect of the cub scouts forms a major part of the appeal that Lawrence feels towards cub scouts.

"It's gotten me out there to do those things," he said. "It makes me feel more connected to the community."

Lawrence is uncomfortable viewing himself as role model. He admits that being a den leader does inherently mean that he is a role model, but that

does not mean that he is the most comfortable with that assumption.

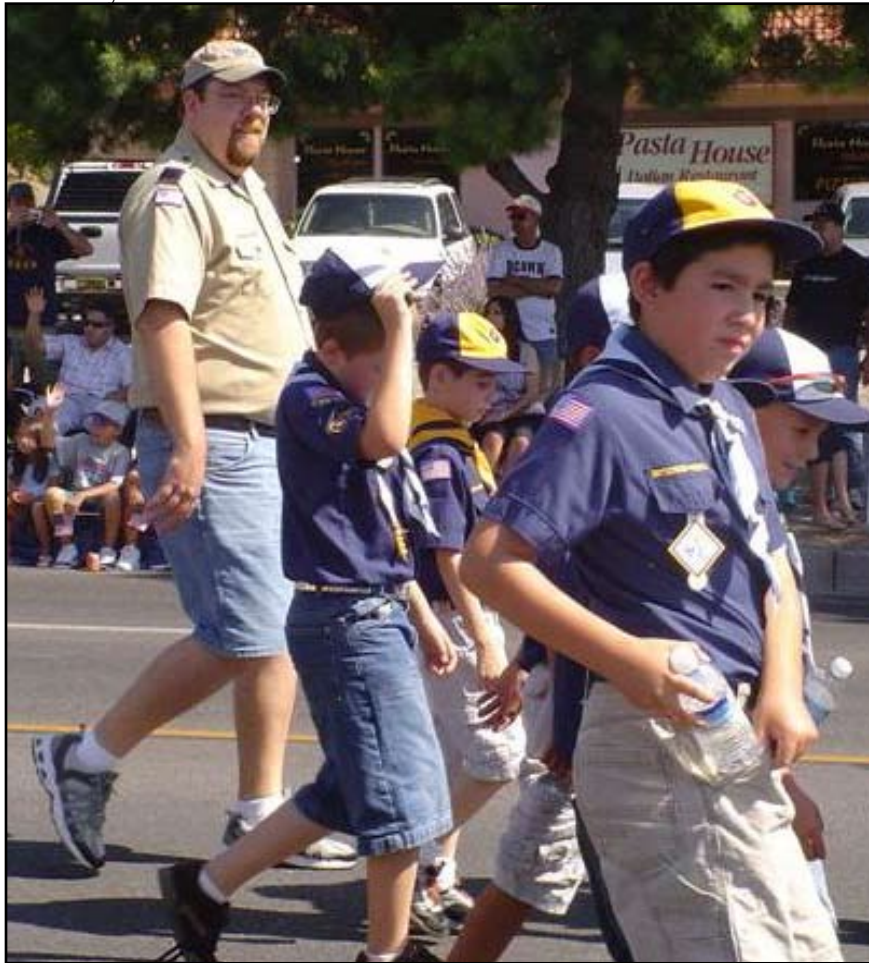
"They want to know what to do and how to do it and I guess if that makes me a role model than I guess it does," said Lawrence.

The aspect of den leader that Lawrence enjoys most is helping members of his troop do something for the first time, like pulling weeds, going camping, and other such similar things. He commented upon the fact that because for many of them they are doing something for the first time they feel uncomfortable and want reassurance as well as guidance, which is what he provides as a den leader.

According to Lawrence, his more interesting

experiences as a den leader have come when he takes his troop camping at Cochiti Lake. He reminds many of his scouts to not run through cactus, and will always have one kid in his group not heed his warnings and learn the hard way.

Lawrence enjoys watching and helping his troop adjust to camping in the great outdoors.



**John Lawrence marches with the scouts of Pack 747 at Rio Rancho's 4th of July Parade.**

File photo

"One of the things scouts does is gets kids out and into the community."

His troop has participated in tree planting, food drives and trash pick-ups in local neighborhoods. These community service projects, besides benefiting the community and teaching the cub scouts the value of being good Samaritans has also pushed Lawrence to have a more pronounced presence in the community.